

## THE FRENCH ADMINISTRATION OF INDO-CHINA

the separation of powers. Modernized legislation and an educational programme were likewise drafted. The 1925 Agreement, whereby Annam seemed to be moving towards direct administration, was thus given a different orientation. This arrangement, because of the outcry, had been immediately and officially announced as temporary. The Protectorate pleaded solely a desire to cut short the palace intrigues which were inevitable during any imperial minority. Nevertheless, it had left the Emperor with only the macabre privilege of promoting and demoting the dead. Bao-Dai, however, showed himself more concerned with the living, and his reforms have succeeded, in spite of the opposition of traditionalists, in forcing Annam faster along the road to Westernization.

The depression and native revolts had already forced Pasquier to swerve somewhat from his goal, and an aeroplane accident in the early months of 1934 brusquely cut short his remarkable accomplishments. Headstrong functionaries and smouldering native discontent required a strong man to be Pasquier's successor. He was found in the person of Rene Robin, also a functionary of long standing in the colony. His record as Resident Superior of Tonkin had shown great energy. He had promulgated a new civil code, pushed through a network of dykes, and actively suppressed the native uprisings. Whereas Pasquier's policy was characterized by *souphsse*, Robin's was marked by a taste for authority and action. Though his encouragement of the Legionaries' brutality at Vinh is an ineradicable blot in native eyes, Robin can point to the security and peace which Indo-Chhia has since enjoyed as the best justification of his methods. In his official speeches,

Robin reiterates  
his taste for clemency and the humanity of his native  
policy, yet his  
critics still keep green the memory of his share in the  
massacres in  
Annamu

The apparent swiftness with which the depression  
has lifted undo:  
Robin's magic touch is either miraculous or a tribute  
to his sagacity.  
But one must also add that if Indo-China has been  
able to survive  
the depression with flying colours it is due not only to  
*hex* GovemOTS-  
General, but also to M. DietheJm, the colony's financial  
director from  
1928 to 1934. He heroically brought down the general  
budget from  
108,000,000 to 55,000,000 piastres. Recognizing the  
vital necessity of  
exportations, Robin has fought to keep the French  
market open IB  
Indo-Chinese rice, and to make mmmerciai treaties  
with Far Eastern  
neighbours. Draconian measures of economy have  
**succeeded** in  
balancing the budget without devaluating the piastre,  
sijncl Robin